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AUTHOR Garman, Noreen B.
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ABSTRACT

In response to the broad question of what is needed to ensure quality instruction into the next century, this paper addresses three related issues. First, it is suggested that radically different inquiry and research perspectives, based on the quasi-anthropological concept of schools as culture systems, need to be subsumed into educators' professional consciousness. The need to pay more attention to the quality of life in schools, especially as it relates to collegiality and professional kinship among educators is also stressed. Finally, it is argued that a new paradigm is needed for thinking about instruction. Educators need to abandon the instrumental view of education, which looks at teaching methods or learning outcomes in isolation, and shift their focus of interest to "the educative act," at the zone of interaction between teachers and students. It is concluded that proposing the "dance of the intellect" is a suitable metaphor for the interrelated process of teaching and learning. (TE)

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LEADERSHIP AND THE EDUCATIVE ACT: LOOKING TOWARD THE NEXT CENTURY TO ENSURE QUALITY INSTRUCTION

Noreen B. Garman, Ph.D.
University of Pittsburgh

The John Dewey Society Memorial Lecture
Invited presentation
The Annual Conference of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
San Francisco, March 1-4, 1986

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This presentation is dedicated to two beloved colleagues who died within the past year:

Morris Cogan
John L. Morgan

I miss them very much!

The question in our presentation today has been posited by the John Dewey Society members as follows: "What is needed to ensure quality instruction into the next century?" I guess the first order of business is to try to ensure that there IS a next century and that the quality of life as we know it allows us to continue to struggle toward a harmionious planet on which to live, one where trust and human dignity are valued over expediency and manipulation. Each one of us, as a citizen of the world, is obliged to come to terms with this as we do our work in a global sense as well as in our daily environment. It is with this in mind that I will get only slightly more specific in addressing the question with the following three points:

...the need for radically different inquiry and research perspectives to seep into the taken-for-granted level of our professional consciousness.

...the need to pay more attention to the quality of life in the schools--especially as it relates to the way we make connections to one another and our sense of belongingess to the community of educators.

...the issue of "ensuring quality instruction for the next century."

My own field of study is instructional supervision--so a part of my focus here is directed toward supervisors--but in a larger sense I'm talking about aspects of leadership which relate to all educators, and ultimately to students.

In the early part of this decade we continued to hear a great deal about Thomas Kuhn's "paradigm shift," so much so that it has become a modern parable for depicting a radical shift in our collective consciousness toward another world view. We talk alot about "being on the brink," but the old images are very

strong. Instrumental systems theory hangs around us in teaching and curriculum design as well as in our narrow picture of what clinical supervision is. We desperately need to internalize different ways to inquire for ourselves about our practice as well as to do formal research. At the present time there is a substantial interest in experiential inquiry--interpretive in approach--which holds a good deal of promise--hopefully to look at human communication,[1] human capacity to make promises for possibilities and human action and commitment. In other words, we need a mode of thinking about thinking that allows us to invent ourselves and our future.

In the leadership literature these days there is a renewed interest in looking at the quality of life issue, assuming that it also relates to quality instruction. It is currently being articulated through a quasi-anthropological view of schools as culture systems and leadership as cultural expression. The cultural perspective invites us to pay attention to the way in which we seek to belong and to recognize the symbols, rituals and and myths which guide our actions. The overarching principle resides in our recognition of the power of language (the Wittgensteinian notion of the "bewitchment of our intelligence by the means of language.") and in the attention to" metaphors we live by" as Lakoff and Johnson[2] describe in their work.We are reminded that these are the ways in which we perceive, think and act. Reality itself is defined by metaphor, and as metaphors vary from culture to culture, so do the realities they define. Perhaps one of the finest treatise on the subject of culture to

date is a collection of papers edited by Sergiovanni and Corbally,[3] entitled LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE. Underlying the cultural perspective in these chapters is the concept of community and the importance of shared meanings and shared values. Sergiovanni alludes to the need to move away from instrumentalism as he says, "Leadership within the cultural perspective takes on a more qualitative image: of less concern is the leader's behavioral style, and leadership effectiveness is not viewed merely as the instrumental summation of the link between behavior and objectives. Instead, what the leader stands for and communicates to others is considered important. The object of leadership is the stirring of human consciousness, the interpretation and enhancement of meanings, the articulation of key cultural strands, and the linking of organizational members to them." Here leadership is seen as cultural expression. A set of norms, beliefs and priniciples emerge to which organizational members give allegiance. These represent a strong bond which brings people together to work on behalf of the organization.

Hopefully this promising line of inquiry from some of our brightest scholars will seep into the consciousness of instructional leaders and they will find the insight to shape their performance beyond techiques and immediacy. For one thing, cultural expression takes longer than technical expression and we will need a different timeframe for our notion of progress. For another, there are subtle, yet profound, interpretations which boarder on moral and ethical issues. As busy supervisors, we often have the capacity to trivialize the subtle meanings of

profound ideas in our rush to act them out right away. We can be persuaded by the Readers Digest versions and the popularized models of management and training.

With a more dissident view, however, Scott and Mitchell[4], in a recent Opinion piece in the Chronicle of Higher Education, see the current trend in corporate cultureism as yet another way for management to express its longstanding lack of respect for human dignity by manipulation of employees' values. The authors suggest that " from Chester I. Barnard, the pre-eminent management authority of the 1930's, to Peters and Waterman in the 1980's, the message is unmistakable: People are not valued per se, but only as instruments for achieving organizational goals. Therefore, management must shape the values of the 'human resources' to conform to organizational values. In this cyncial process" say the authors, "management outlines symbolic belief systems for others without itself adhering to them. Management's actions frequently are symbolic, of course. Managers do manipulate values through symbolism, and managers of excellent organizations do it excellently." The authors are professors of Management and Organization and their concern here is about corruption and greed in so-called "excellent companies." However, their message is well taken. It challenges us to search deeply within our mindframes and motives. To what extent are we involved in outlining symbolic belief systems for others without adhering to them ourselves? If it is important to focus on what the leader stands for and communicates to others, then it would seem that one's internal state, one's frame of mind, is central

to the cultural perspective. How one identifies with associates, how one connects with the world of teachers and learners, is as vital a piece of self-knowledge as how one pictures the environment. The problem I so often have with broad organizational theories is that it is hard to find real people among the ideas. A typical example is Warren Bennis[5] statement about empowerment, (an internal state some of us have tried to write about as important for educators.) "Empowerment," Bennis says, "is the capacity to create environments--the appropriate social architecture--that can tap and harness the energies and abilities necessary to bring about desired results." There's nothing terribly wrong with the statement, it's just that as I read this work and others like it, I began to get a faint sense of deja vu...a revisit to Walden II with contemporary baggage. I think a vital piece that is missing in this literature is our need to describe a condition of mind and spirit, "mindscape" as Sergiovanni[6] calls it, that pictures how we define our communication and connectedness to those we work with.

In 1969 Morris Cogan introduced me to a concept for the basis of the clinical supervisory interaction. He called it a "colleagial relationship." We had trouble saying and spelling the word colleagial..no dictionary referenced it, and when I later used colleagiality[7] in my own writing it was also awkward. He ended up using"colleagueship" in his book.[8] He put a great deal of emphasis on that notion and, in his book, he spent a whole chapter explicating the notion of colleagueship by arguing against other kinds of relationships: the superior-subordinate,

the teacher-student, the counselor-client, the evaluator, the helper, all had inherent flaws as far as Cogan was concerned. Interestingly, although he says in several places, " we have set the concept of colleagueship at the heart of clinical supervision"[9.] that idea doesn't appear very much in subsequent works about clinical supervision which take their base from the Cogan work. We don't hear very much about colleagueship in supervision and administration theory. Generally, colleagueship is reserved for teachers in collaborative arrangements with one another, and, as in a recent article in Educational Leadership entitled COLLABORATION FOR COLLEAGUESHIP: A PROGRAM IN SUPPORT OF TEACHERS[10.] describes "working mathematicians reaching across organizational boundaries to help with mathmatics teaching." But what about school leaders, supervisors and administrators, do they think of themselves as colleagues to the teachers and librarians? I suggest that at the present time this is the most colleagial-resistant group. Perhaps some administrators need hierarchy to keep their formal responsibilities in tact (The rank of chief executive officer suggest a strong military metaphor still.) This position is substantiated in the Alfonso/Goldsberry[11.] chapter in the 1982 ASCD Yearbook entitled "Colleagueship in Supervision." The authors were clearly talking about peer supervision here as they say: "Supervision is a formal organizational act: moreover, supervision always implies a superordinate-subordinate relationship. The term "peer supervision" and "colleague supervision" may be contradictions, for one cannot be both a peer/colleague and a supervisor at the

same time. Clearly, teachers can and should help each other in a variety of ways, but a supervisor is vested with organizational authority for decision making about others." In another context, Alfonso, Firth and Neville,[12.] examining a dimension of leadership, include one proposition as follows: "The probability of sucessfull leadership will be increased if the leader maintains some degree of psychological distance from subordinates." They continue by suggesting that "supervisors are likely to be more effective if they do not become an integral part of the teacher group." Colleagiality here is construed as separate class distinction.

I would like to propose that we begin to think about the concept of colleagiality as professional kinship. If our hope is for cultural expression to develop a strong bond which brings people together to work on behalf of the organization, then it is important to rethink the ways in which we mentally connect ourselves to members of the community. At one level, colleagiality is that spirit which allows me to connect with another person so that both of us are aware of the connectedness. I am able to identify with the other at a level of respect and compassion. I am not "at odds" with my colleague even though I may not agree with him or her.

More important. At another level, a form of connectedness is manifested when I am able to identify with the community of educators, and especially with the heritage of teaching-learning and schooling. The "we" of colleagiality is articulated when we accept the richness of our common mythology and folklore of the

teaching world. The cultural perspective allows us to appreciate the importance of our mythology. If we take Joseph Campbell's 13. definition of myth as "symbolized facts of the mind," the myth is a conscious representation of our past identity and therefore the source and nature of our culture within the educational institution. Myths are life supporting. To reject our heritage is to sever our connections to the past, a form of collective denial that can only lead to professional alienation.

It is within this context that I encourage us to identify the way we see ourselves belonging to the educational community. Am I a member or an overseer, a modern patroon who holds certain manorial privileges? Do I feel at home in a fifth grade art class? in a teachers' lounge? in the school cafeteria, in great libraries and museums which are all part of our rich legacy? Do I feel a kinship in the traditions of education? These conditions of mind and spirit will let me know how I feel about colleagiality. <u>For the educational leader, it is the spirit of colleagiality which can make the difference between trust and human dignity on one hand and expediency and manipulation on the other.</u> As we enter the next century, it seems to me that these are important issues with regard to the quality of life within the educational community.

As to the issue of "ensuring quality instruction into the next century," ....at the present time I don't believe we have the capacity to ensure quality instruction as we define it with our current language. In our practice and research we are still

dominated by the instrumental view of instruction, which looks at teaching and learning as separate elements--teaching is pictured as "methods," or "techniques"-- learning is psychologically defined as narrow results of students. To move into the next century for our research and practice, we need to be able to look very carefully at the zone between those two elements---the action of educational encounters. We need to look at the <u>educative act</u> itself as the centrality of the new paradigm. If we can find ways to study this zone of action and give language to it, we may be able to understand better the transfer of knowledge, intellectual insight and invention. I have a hunch when we begin to accept a new way of thinking, we will find within the picture of the educative act--teachers and students as encapsulated learners needing to be free of socialized learning patterns---we'll find teachers and students as undisciplined learners needing to find out more about disciplined inquiry--we'll find a need for belongingness, and within that, the recognition of communities of learners and scholars. We'll stop seeing ideas as always generic objects, but rather attached to human endeavor--to real people. We'll talk about spirituality, integrity and justice. Something of this nature will be central to our current language of objectives and tasks. We'll stop talking about "implementation" and start talking about "action"-these actions will be part of that discourse.

Perhaps we'll even start to think of the educative act as the <u>dance of the intellect.</u> Think of that metaphor instead of the current military/industrial one we now accept. If we can bring ourselves to imagine the dance--sometimes partners with one

leading, sometimes mutually joining, often individual---the dance of the intellect as the formal participation in events, actions, producing accepted patterns and meaningful results--then let us also think beyond our current fashion, which is still the school minuet. Ours can include the classic forms of expression as well as breakdancing. If we can do this, then I think we have a good chance at the future.

NOTES

1. It is especially significant that work by scholars in the field of artificial intelligence are currently examining human communication from the hermeneutic perspective. See, for example, Winograd and Flores, *Understanding Computers and Cognition.* Ablex Publishing, Norwood, N.J. 1986

2. Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By.* University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1980.

3. Sergiovanni and Corbally,(eds.) *Leadership and Organizational Culture.* University of Illinois Press, Urbana, 1984.

4. Scott and Mitchell, "The Moral Failure of Management Education." *The Chronicle of Higher Education,* Dec.11, 1985

5. Bennis, W. "Transformative Power and Leadership." in Sergiovanni and Corbally,(eds.) *Leadership and Organizational Culture.* University of Illinois Press, Urbana, 1984

6. Sergiovanni, T. "Landscapes, Mindscapes, and Reflective Practice in Supervision." *Journal of Curriculum and Supervision.* Vol. 1, No. 1. Fall, 1985.

7. Garman, N. "The Clinical Approach to Supervision." in Sergiovanni,(ed.) *Supervision of Teaching.* Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development 1982 Yearbook, Alexandria,Va.

8. Cogan, M. *Clinical Supervision.* Houghton Mifflin Co. Boston, 1973. pp.58-71.

9. Cogan, pg.219.

10. Nelson, B. "Collaboration for Colleagueship: A Program in Support of Teachers." *Educational Leadership.* Vol 43. No. 5. February, 1986.

11. Alfonso and Goldsberry, "Colleagueship in Supervision," in Sergiovanni, (ed.) *Supervision of Teaching.* Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development 1982 Yearbook, Alexandria, Va.

12. Alfonso, Firth and Neville, *Instructional Supervision: A Behavior System.* 2nd ed. Allyn and Bacon, Boston,1981.

13. Campbell, J. *Myths to Live By.* Bantam, N.Y. 1978.